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THE OBSERVATOR.

On a fooliſh and blaſphemous Book, entitl'd, The Great *Elijah*'s firſt Appearance, *&c. A Defence of the Toleration-Act, as encouraging no Blaſphemy, Hereſy, or abſtaining from publick Worſhip. A farther Defence of the Societies of Reformation againſt Dr.* Sacheverell, *whoſe Charge againſt them is prov'd to be contrary to the Laws of God, the Laws of the Land, and the Canons of the Church, and that he himſelf has broke thro' all of 'em.*

From Saturday, November 12. to Wednesday, November 16. 1709.

Country-m. I Have a grievous Charge againſt you, Maſter, which is, that while you ſet up as an Advocate for the Proteſtant Doctrine, as eſtabliſh'd by the Toleration-Act, for a Standard of Union among Proteſtants, you advertiſe Things quite contrary to it, and particularly in laſt Saturday's *Obſervator*, there was a Pamphlet adve.tis'd, call'd, *The Great* Elijah's *firſt Appearance to the ſeveral Churches and Nations of the Earth*, &c. wherein one Mr. *Freke* pretends 'to be the Great *Elijah*, 'and to have a divine Miſſion to lead all Churches 'and Nations, and that they are oblig'd to follow 'him, on Pain of all the Curſes in the Revelation 'of St. *John*, compares himſelf to Chriſt, pretends 'to have the full Effuſion of his Spirit, to lead and 'controul all Churches and Nations, and threa-'tens Vengeance on all that traduce him, pag. 20, 21. And pag. 22, 23. 'pretends to a divine Pow-'er to impreſs every one as a Soldier to the Lord 'of Hoſts, and profanely ſwears by *him that liveth 'for ever and ever, that he can lead us to the true Ho-'ly of Holys*; and abundance more of ſuch blaſphemous Stuff, contrary to Scripture, Reaſon, and Senſe.

Obſ. Had I conſented to that Advertiſement, *Roger*, I ſhould have thought my ſelf worthy of the greateſt Puniſhment; but you know 'tis none of my Buſineſs to attend the Preſs, or to take in Advertiſements, otherwiſe this ſhould never have paſs'd. Let thoſe who put it in, anſwer it; I make no Apology for them: But I aſſure you, *Roger*, if any Thing of that Sort be advertis'd again in the *Obſervator*, thoſe concern'd in it, ſhall have no farther Concern with me. However, the beſt on't is, that no Body who is not fit for *Bedlam*, can be ſeduc'd by Mr. *Freke*; and nothing but a Plea of Lunacy, can excuſe him from being puniſh'd for Blaſphemy.

Country-m. I am ſatisfy'd with your Defence, Maſter; for I could never think you guilty of any ſuch Thing. Let's return to Dr. *Sacheverell*, for his *Madneſs is ſupported by a Faction that are for a Popiſh Prince, and a* French *Government*, and he has been *enrolling Lives and Fortunes to ſupport him.*

Obſ. 'Tis a melancholy Conſideration, *Roger*, that our holy Religion ſhould be thus ſtabb'd, by Men of perſecuting and tyrannical Principles on the one Hand, and by Hereticks and Enthuſiaſticks on the other; and 'tis remarkable, that the former unjuſtly charge the Toleration-Act with being the Occaſion of the latter; whereas that Act excuſes no Body that *denies the Trinity, ſays there's more Gods than one, denies any of the three Perſons to be God, impugnes the divine Authority of the holy Scriptures, or that don't frequent ſome allow'd Place of publick Worſhip.* The Laws againſt abſenting from Church, are ſtill in Force againſt the latter; and by the 9th and 10th of *Will.* 3. Cap. 32. thoſe who are guilty of the former, are to be depriv'd of all Employments, eccleſiaſtical, civil, or military, except they recant in four Months after Conviction for the firſt Offence, and for the 2d they are made uncapable of ſueing at Law or Equity, of being Guardian, Executor, or receiving any Legacy, or Deed of Gift, or to bear any Office for ever, beſides being liable to three Years Impriſonment: which is ſuch a Security for thoſe fundamental Principles of our Religion, as we never had in the arbitrary Reigns; ſo that if the Laws be defective on that Head, our High-Church may blame themſelves, that they took no more Care while they were in Power; but to ſay the Truth of 'em, they were always more concern'd for the Inventions of Men, than for the reveal'd and ſubſtantial Truths of God.

Country-m. Mr. *Sacheverell*, their preſent Champion, Maſter, has given us a freſh Inſtance of that, otherwiſe he would never have fallen ſo foul upon the Societies of Reformation, who have in ſo generous and Chriſtian a Manner interpoſ'd their Endeavours to ſuppreſs Immorality and Profaneneſs, which is condemn'd by Chriſtians of all Denominations, as well as by the Laws of God, the Laws of the Land, and the Canons of the Church, and is always attended with Judgments upon thoſe Countries where 'tis ſuffer'd to go unpuniſh'd.

Obſ. You may remember what I ſaid on Wedneſday laſt, *Roger*, to demonſtrate the Malice and Falſhood of the Doctor's Charge upon thoſe worthy Perſons, who, with a Zeal like that of *Phineas*, have brought ſo many thouſands to Juſtice, and convicted them of Swearing, Drunkenneſs, Lewdneſs, Profanation of the Lord's Day, *&c.* in order to prevent the Judgments which are ſo ſolemnly denounc'd againſt thoſe Sins, as appears by their Liſts which they print annually. By this Means they have very much cleans'd our Streets of the lewd Night-walkers, other publick Places of deteſtable Gangs of *Sodomites*, and many Parts of the Town of notorious Bawdy-houſes.

Country-m. This aggravates the Doctor's Malice, who accuſes them of invading the private Rights of Perſons and Families, and the Chriſtian Liberty and Innocence of others, Maſter.

Obſ. You ſay well, *Roger*. Theſe Things have not been done in Corners, but in the View of the World. They don't meddle with the private Conduct of Perſons and Families, but only take up ſuch, with the Aſſiſtance of Conſtables, as are openly guilty; and I hope the Doctor will not deny but Conſtables are oblig'd, by Virtue of their Office and Oaths, to ſearch for and ſuppreſs Bawdy-Houſes and Gaming-Houſes, to prevent Tippling and Drunkenneſs in Publick-Houſes, and to take up Swearers, Drunkards, lewd Perſons, and Profaners of the Sabbath; and ſince many of the Conſtables either want Courage or Honeſty to do this of themſelves, how can it be criminal in others, to aſſociate for keeping them to their Duty, and aſſiſting them in it? Had he been at half ſo much Pains to inform himſelf of the Nature and Practice of thoſe Societies, as to ſtudy Invectives againſt them, he might have avoided the Scandal he has brought upon himſelf by ſlandering them.

Country-m. I cannot ſuppoſe it proceeds from Ignorance, Maſter, ſince *An Account of thoſe Societies* was publiſh'd in 1699, *with the Approbation of a conſiderable Number of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, containing a Perſuaſive to Perſons of all Ranks to be zealous*

zealous and diligent in promoting the Execution of the Laws against Profaneneſs and Debauchery; and ſince another was printed laſt Year by *John Diſney*, Eſq; entitul'd, *An Eſſay upon the Execution of the Laws againſt Immorality and Profaneneſs*, in both which Books there are learn'd, ſolid, and religious Anſwers to all that the Doctor has ſaid againſt the Societies, and a great deal more.

Obſ. Thoſe worthy Authors are Members of the Church of *England*, *Roger*, and Ornaments to her for their Learning, Moderation, and Piety; but we are not to wonder, that he ſhews no Regard to them, ſince he overlooks the Approbation of thoſe Societies by 29 Temporal Lords, many of whom were at that Time Privy Counſellors, by nine Biſhops, and by ſeven Judges, whoſe Names are prefix'd to the Account of the Societies, as is alſo the Addreſs of the Houſe of Commons to King *William*, for the ſuppreſſing of Profaneneſs and Vice, and commanding the Laws againſt 'em to be put in Execution; upon which, his Majeſty publiſh'd a Proclamation to that Effect the 20th of *Feb.* 1697. wherein he orders all Officers and Miniſters, eccleſiaſtical and civil, *AND OTHER SUBJECTS WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, and that's every Body who* is Witneſs to the Crimes, *Roger*, to be very vigilant and ſtrict in the *DISCOVERY*, and the effectual Proſecution and Puniſhment of all Perſons guilty of them. The Doctor cannot but know this, becauſe every Miniſter in his reſpective Pariſh or Chappel, is order'd to read that Proclamation, or cauſe it to be read, four times *per Ann.* Her preſent Majeſty has alſo iſſu'd Proclamations of the ſame Nature, by which the Magiſtrates are order'd to put the Laws in Execution; and Miniſters are enjoin'd to ſtir up their reſpective Auditories to the Practice of Piety and Vertue, and the avoiding of all Immorality and Profaneneſs, as appears by the Proclamations of *Mar.* 26. and *Feb.* 25. 1702.

Country-m. This makes the Doctor inexcuſable, Maſter, to reflect thus upon the Societies of Reformation, who anſwer the Canons of the Church, the Law of God, the Laws of the Land, and the Royal Proclamations; whereas, contrary to the Duty of his Office, and to the Diſhonour of his Character, he diſobeys and diſcourages the Execution of all of 'em.

Obſ. Tis a Reproach to his Character indeed, *Roger*, to have been ſo unaccountably malicious, as to charge thoſe Societies with *ſetting up illegal Inquiſitions*, with being *Lyars*, *Whiſperers*, *Backbiters*, *Tale-barers*, *Buſy-Bodies*, *and fit only to keep Company with Thieves*, *Murtherers*, &c. when ſo many of the Right Reverend the Biſhops, and of the Reverend and Pious Clergy of the Church of *England*, not only keep them Company, but have preach'd Sermons for their Encouragement, in which they have given them ſuch Commendations as they juſtly deſerve. Now, *Roger*, ſince no Body can think that ſo many Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and ſo many of the Reverend Clergy of the Church of *England*, would be guilty of ſuch Impiety towards God, or of ſo much Treachery to the Church and State, as to approve and encourage thoſe Societies, did they deſerve the Character the Doctor gives them, he muſt either prove what he has charg'd them with, or publickly recant it, otherwiſe he fixes that Character upon himſelf, which he would ſo unjuſtly fix upon them; and muſt be liable to all his own dreadful Conſequences, of being a Partaker in other Mens Sins, particularly of thoſe publick Ones, the preventing and proſecuting of which, he has done as much as in him lies, to diſcourage.

Country-m. He is the more concern'd to recant this Charge, Maſter, becauſe many of the Perſons he thus accuſes, are ſtaunch Church of *England* Men, Members of the religious Societies, erected on purpoſe to ſtrengthen one another in the Doctrine of the Church, by praying, ſinging of Pſalms, reading the Scriptures, and by Conference againſt Atheiſts, Deiſts, and Socinians; ſeveral of 'em are alſo Members of the Society for propagating the Goſpel in foreign Parts, which is incorporated by a Royal Charter from King *William*. The ſame Perſons have likewiſe been eminently inſtrumental in erecting Charity-Schools throughout the Kingdom, parochial Libraries in meanly endow'd Cures, and in diſperſing Bibles, Common-Prayer Books, Church Catechiſms, and other religious Pieces to our Soldiers and Sea-men, and to poor Families throughout the Nation, many of whom they have alſo reliev'd at their own Charge.

Let the World judge then, Maſter, whether the Doctor has not been acted by the grand Accuſer of the Brethren in this odious and falſe Charge, which reflects upon the late King *William* and Queen *Mary*, and the late Lord Arch-biſhop of *Canterbury*, the Great Patrons of the Societies of Reformation, on ſo many of the preſent Lords Spiritual and Temporal, on ſuch Numbers of Reverend Divines, Members of Parliament, Juſtices of the Peace, Lawyers, eminent Citizens, and good Men of all Ranks, that are concern'd in this Deſign; and not only upon them, but upon the Church of *Scotland*, the beſt of the Biſhops, and others of the Church of *Ireland*, and moſt of the Proteſtant Churches beyond Sea, who have follow'd this glorious Example.

Obſ. And I can tell you farther, *Roger*, that his Reflexions are againſt the Church of *England*, which, by Canon 113 and 116, has enjoin'd Miniſters, Church-Wardens, Side-men, Curates, Subſtitutes, &c. to preſent ſuch Offences, and *ANY GODLY DISPOS'D PERSONS*, upon Notice of enormous Crimes, to *MOVE* the Miniſter, Church-Wardens, or Side-men, to preſent the ſame, as they tender the Glory of God, and Reformation of Sin; ſo that by the Canons, you ſee every good Man is invited to be an *Informer*, *Roger*, to the Eccleſiaſtical Judge, and by the Laws of the Land, and Royal Proclamations, to the civil Magiſtrate. But Canon 53. concerns the Doctor a little nearer, *Roger*; for *to prevent publick Oppoſition betwixt Preachers, and the Offence and Diſquiet of the People by ſuch Oppoſition*, no Preacher is in the Pulpit to impugne or confute any Doctrine deliver'd by another Preacher in the ſame Church, or in any Church near adjoining, without Leave from the Biſhop of the Dioceſe; and I dare ſay, *Roger*, he had no Leave from the Lord Biſhop of *London*, to oppoſe his Brethren the Biſhops, and other Divines, who have preach'd Reformation-Sermons, and juſtify'd the Societies in *Bow*-Church, &c. and I am morally certain, that the Lord Biſhop of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*, who has preach'd in Defence and Commendation of the Societies himſelf, never gave him Leave to preach the contrary Doctrine at *Derby*, in his own Dioceſe. Beſides, the Doctor, by his railing againſt Moderation, contrary to what has been preach'd by others, acts againſt the Canon aforeſaid; ſo that the Church-Wardens, or Party griev'd, may ſignify his Miſbehaviour to the Biſhop, and not ſuffer him to preach any more in the Place he has ſo abus'd, 'till the Biſhop take farther Order in it, except he promiſe to forbear all ſuch Contention, and by the ſame Canon 53, the Biſhop is to make him give Satisfaction where he gave the Offence, and I believe moſt People are of Opinion, that his Recantation ought to be as publick, as his railng in St. *Paul*'s Cathedral on the 5th Inſtant. In the mean Time, ſince he is thus prov'd to be a Diſſenter from the Church, let him ſee how he can get off of his own Conſequence, that all ſuch are Traytors to the State, eſpecially ſince he rails at the Queen's Adminiſtration and the Toleration Act.

Advertiſements.

☞ Juſt publiſh'd, ☜

QUACKERY UNMASK'D, being a rational and effectual Anſwer to Mr. Marten's Treatiſe of the Venereal Diſeaſe, its Appendix, (for publiſhing which, as appears by the Gazette of the 30th of July, he now ſtands indicted) and the charitable Surgeon. Sold (Price 1s 6d.) by D. Brown without Temple-Bar, G. Strahan in Cornhill, J. Woodward in St. Chriſtopher's Church-yard, B. Barker in Weſtminſter-hall, Bookſellers; and by the Author, Dr. Spinke, at his Houſe, the Golden Ball in the dark Paſſage, three Doors beyond the Sun Tavern in Honey-Lane Market, Cheapſide. Where alſo may be had, ☞ ANTIVENEREAL-PILLS, &c. (the moſt powerful Medicines for that Diſeaſe yet known) Price 3 s. the Box, with Directions.

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